

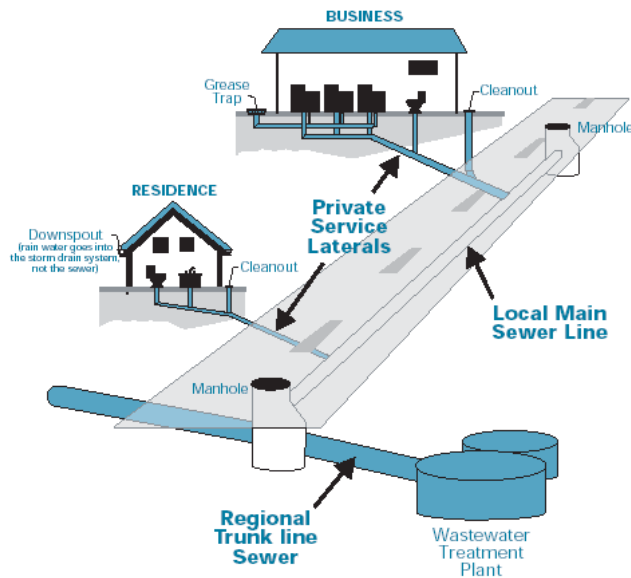
SSO Fact Sheet

What is a Collection System?

Sanitary sewer collection systems convey wastewater from your home and businesses to wastewater treatment facilities. Collection systems consist of pipes, cleanouts, manholes, and pumping stations located on both public and private property.

How a Collection System Works

Sewer pipes that lead from a home or business to the local main or regional trunk lines are called service laterals. In some communities the property owner is responsible for the service lateral from the home or business all the way to the local main line (both on private property and public right). While in other communities, the property owner is only responsible for the service lateral on private property, and the local sewer agency is responsible for the portion of the lateral in the public right of way. Property owners are responsible for maintaining their portion of the lateral, while maintenance of the portion of the collection system that is publicly owned is the responsibility of the local sewer agency. Many sewer agencies have adopted ordinances requiring maintenance of service laterals. Check with your city sewer/local public works department for more information.



Unfortunately, untreated sewage is not always contained within the confines of the collection system. These instances are called sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) and can cause health hazards, damage to homes and businesses, and threaten the environment, local waterways, and beaches.

Common Causes of SSOs

Grease can build up inside and eventually block sewer pipes. Grease gets into the sewer from food establishments, household drains, as well as from poorly maintained commercial grease traps and interceptors.

Structure problems caused by tree roots in the lines, broken/cracked pipes, missing or broken cleanout caps, or undersized sewers can cause blockages.

Infiltration and Inflow (I/I) impacts pipe capacity and is caused when groundwater seeps through leaky pipes or manholes beneath the surface, or surface water (typically stormwater runoff) enters the collection system through manhole covers, rain gutters, or other surface exposures.

Operation and Maintenance of a collection system includes cleaning and inspecting pipes and manholes, as well as maintaining pump stations to ensure the collection systems can properly convey sewage to a wastewater treatment facility.